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WEDNESDAY, : : :

OCTOBER 27th, 1909,

At 7.30 : : : : :

ANNOTATED PROGRAMME : :

PRICE THREEPENCE : : : : :

PROGRAMME.

OVERTURE - "The Bartered Bride" - *Smelana*

ARIA - - "Vesti la giubba" (*Pagliacci*) - *Leoncavallo*
("On with the Motley.")

Signor TAMINI.

CONCERTO in D (Op. 77) for Violin and Orchestra - *Brahms*

Solo Violin—Miss KATHLEEN PARLOW.

SONG - Lohengrin's Farewell (*Lohengrin*) *Wagner*

Signor TAMINI.

INTERVAL OF TEN MINUTES.

PRELUDE "On the Cliffs of Cornwall" (*The Wreckers*) *Ethel Smyth*

As performed by command of the King and Queen
at His Majesty's Theatre, London, July, 1909.

Sir EDWARD ELGAR'S NEW SYMPHONY in A flat (Op. 55)

BLÜTHNER GRAND PIANOFORTE.

Programme.

SMETANA - - Overture, "The Bartered Bride"

Smetana's life was comparatively uneventful. He was born at Leitomischl, in Bohemia, on March 2nd, 1824, and, after a short course of study in Prague, was for a time a pupil of Liszt. He then opened a conservatoire in Prague, and was for a while conductor at Gothenburg. From 1866 to 1874 he was conductor of the National Theatre in Prague, resigning the post because of his growing deafness. He suffered from mental derangement for some time before his death. He is rightly looked on as the founder of the new Bohemian School of music, though his fame has been eclipsed by that of Dvorák. He composed many operas—mostly on national subjects—of which "Die verkaufte Braut" (1866) is the first and the best known; others which deserve mention being "Dalibor" (1866), "The Kiss" (1876), and "Libussa" (1881). His Symphonic Poems also attained great success, the most familiar being the series of six, "My Fatherland" (Vltava, Visegrad, Sarka, Aus Böhmen, Hain und Flur, Tabor, Blaník), and his "Carnival in Prague." His quartet in E minor, "Aus meinem Leben," is also frequently played.

"Die verkaufte Braut" was produced in Prague on May 30th, 1866, and was presented for the first time in German in 1893, the German Text being by Max Kalbeck, the well-known biographer of Brahms. It was played in London in 1896 by the Saxe-Coburg Company at Drury Lane, and at Covent Garden in the early part of 1907.

The original libretto by K. Sabina deals with the story of Kezal, a marriage-broker, who tries to arrange a marriage between Mary, the daughter of Kruschina, a rich farmer, and Wenzel the son of Mischa, another well-to-do peasant. Mary

is, however, in love with Hans, and Hans turns out to be the lost son of Mischa. Wenzel goes off with a Spanish dancer, so all ends happily and Kezal is outwitted.

Before "The Bartered Bride" became popular, the Overture was played separately under the title of "Lustspiel" Overture (Overture to a Comedy).

The brisk figure which is given out by full orchestra at the outset is taken from the introduction to the last scene of Act II. This is immediately followed by the first theme, which is announced by strings only. It is of somewhat similar character, and is treated in imitation. This is the theme which in the opera is associated with Kezal. Gradually the wood-wind and brass join in with figures derived from the opening bar of the theme, and we reach suggestions of the second subject, interspersed with allusions to the first theme. Ultimately the second theme, which is in thirds and has the character of a national dance, is stated by strings and wood-wind, figures taken from the initial bar of the first subject serving as accompaniment. This melody is also derived from the closing scene of Act II. The second theme is then presented once again *fortissimo* by the whole orchestra, and this is followed by a *Coda* founded on a phrase of even crotchets, to which the opening bars of the introduction are added.

The development starts with the first bar of the first theme given out by strings in unison, with detached notes of the brass on the first beat of each bar. A new melody for oboe soon makes its appearance against an insistent crochet figure for second violins. Later the second theme enters (in thirds as before) on the wood-wind, a new phrase for violins and 'celli being used as a counter-subject.

This leads to the recapitulation, which includes the introductory bars and the *Coda*. The final *Coda*, which is of some length, is based on the two principal themes, the figures of the first serving as accompaniment to the second as above. The closing bars return to the prefatory passages.

A. K.

R. LEONCAVALLO - "Vesti la giubba" (*I Pagliacci*)

SIGNOR TAMINI.

Recitar!—mentre preso dal delirio.
Non so più quel che dico e quel che faccio
Eppur—è d' uopo. Sforzati!
Bah, se' tu forse un uom? Tu se' Pagliaccio!

Vesti la giubba e la faccia infarina.
La gente paga e rider vuole quà.
E se Arlecchin t' invola Colombina,
Ridi, Pagliaccio! e ognuno applaudirà!
Tramuta in lazzi lo spasmo ed il pianto;
In una smorfia il singhiozzo e 'l dolor—
Ridi, Pagliaccio, sul tuo amore infranto!
Ridi del duol che t' avvelena il cor!

English Version.

To act, with my heart maddened with sorrow.
I know not what I'm saying or what I'm doing.
Yet I must face it. Courage, my heart!
Thou art not a man; thou'rt but a jester!

On with the motley, the paint and the powder,
The people pay thee, and want their laugh, you
know.

If Harlequin thy Columbine has stolen,
Laugh, Punchinello! The world will cry
"Bravo!"

Go hide with laughter thy tears and thy sorrow,
Sing and be merry, playing thy part,
Laugh, Punchinello, for the love that is ended,
Laugh for the sorrow that is eating thy heart.

F. E. Weatherly.

BRAHMS Concerto in D (Op. 77) for Violin and Orchestra

Solo Violin—Miss KATHLEEN PARLOW.

1. Allegro ma non troppo. 2. Adagio.
3. Allegro giocoso ma non troppo vivace.

This Concerto—like that of Beethoven and that of Mendelssohn—its composer's only work of its kind, was completed by Brahms in 1879, two years after the first Symphony, and one year after the second. It is dedicated to Joachim, who was the first (and for some time the only) artist to perform it in public. The date of its first performance is usually given as New Year's Day, 1879, and the place as the Gewandhaus in Leipzig; but Professor Moser, in his "Life of Joachim" (English translation, p. 263), speaks of his having "played the Brahms Violin Concerto for the first time in public at one of the Hochschule Concerts." Perhaps he refers to the first performance in Berlin. On that occasion the Press "attacked Joachim most violently for having thought fit to honour such a barren production with a public performance, and for having compelled the student orchestra to accompany such unmitigated rubbish." It met with much the same reception, indeed, as the D minor Piano Concerto twenty years previously, but Dr. Joachim was powerful enough to secure due recognition for it very soon. The great artist's connection with the work is not confined to the dedication and the first performances; he also took an active interest in its composition, and himself wrote the *cadenzas*. Dr. Hanslick is quite right in calling it "a ripe fruit of the friendship between Joachim and Brahms." There is no doubt, too, that the Hungarian colour of the last movement was, in part at least, meant as a tribute to the great violinist. Of all famous violin concertos this one gives the soloist the least opportunities of mere display, and in none is the solo-instrument so much part and parcel of the orchestra. Indeed, even so ardent a Brahmsian as Dr. Spitta remarks that in the slow movement the "deposition" of the solo violin is carried to undue lengths. Others, however, consider that movement to display a more perfect balance between soloist

and orchestra than anything else in the whole literature of the violin.

The first movement (*Allegro ma non troppo*) opens with a *tutti* of considerable length. It starts with a first subject, stated without preface by bassoons, violas, and 'cellos in octaves, there being no harmony till the end of the sixth bar. The melodious continuation of this is given to the oboe, accompanied by strings; and after eight bars this is succeeded by another subject in octaves in strings and wood-wind. after a return of the opening bars an episode based on a yearning figure for oboes and horns plays an important part in the rest of the movement. From now onwards the music is more strenuous in character, and a characteristic figure should be noticed, which later is the chief feature of the accompaniment of the first solo. This first solo, which begins shortly afterwards, is in the nature of a fantasia on what has gone before. A new chord-theme is next heard, and presently the second theme is stated in the basses and repeated by the solo-instrument. The exposition ends shortly afterwards with a series of brilliant passages from the solo. In the course of the elaborate development we may notice a new contrapuntal figure, the rhythm of which recalls that of one of the best-known passages in the first movement of the "Eroica" Symphony. A series of leaping passages for the soloist leads to a return of the opening subject given out *ff* by the whole orchestra, with which the recapitulation begins. In this the previous material is somewhat shortened, and after a *tutti*, founded on the opening bar, there is the usual *cadenza*, after which the *Coda* begins with a richly harmonized version of the first subject given to the soloist, and grows in intensity to the end.

The second movement (*Adagio*) begins with two preliminary bars of sustained harmonies, after which the oboe gives out the placid pastoral first subject. When this has been amplified and restated with peacefully but continuously moving passages for the soloist, we come to a middle section in F sharp minor, of which the subject is entrusted to the solo violin. Subsequently the principal theme is repeated by the

oboe, and in the rest of the movement the most remarkable feature is a version of the principal subject with slightly altered intervals, given to the solo and the horn in dialogue. A specially noticeable peculiarity of this movement is the fact—which is without a parallel in the history of a Concerto—that the principal theme never appears in its full form in the solo-instrument at all.

The *Allegro giocoso ma non troppo vivace* begins with a statement of the principal theme without preface by the solo. It has been said of it that “its sharply punctuated rhythms; the accentuated second beat of accompaniment; the jerky quavers in the third bar; and the sudden modulation into the relative minor, mark it out as distinctly Hungarian.” After some repetition and an episode it is repeated by the orchestra *fortissimo*. The second subject is given out by the soloist, and accompanied by an inversion of itself. In the middle section there is a more tranquil new theme, first given to the soloist and then to the oboe. The composer departs from strict *Rondo* form by omitting the principal subject in the development, and proceeding at once to the second. There is no cadence, but a cadential passage introduces the *Coda*, in which the rhythm of the first subject is transformed, there being now a crotchet and three triplets in each bar. An inverted version of the second subject, accompanied by restless leaps by the soloist, is followed by still further modifications of the first figure of the first subject, which, with the exception of one scale-passage, occupy attention to the end.

A. K.

WAGNER Lohengrin's Farewell to the Swan
 (*Lohengrin* Act III.)
 SIGNOR TAMINI.

My trusty swan !
Oh that this summons ne'er had been !
Oh that this day I ne'er had seen !
I thought the year would soon be o'er,
When thy probation would have passed ;
Then, by the Grail's transcendent pow'r,
In thy true shape we'd meet at last !

O Elsa, think what joys thy doubts have ended !
 Couldst thou not trust in me for one short year ?
 Then thy dear brother, whom the Grail defended,
 In life and honour thou hadst welcomed here.
 If he returns when our sweet ties are broken,
 This horn, this sword, and ring give him in token ;
 His arm will conquer when the sword he raises,
 This horn will aid him in the hour of need,
 This ring shall mind him who did most befriend him—
 Of me, who saved thee from the depths of woe ;
 Let it remind him who did most befriend him—
 Of me, who saved thee from the depths of woe !
 Farewell ! Farewell ! Farewell ! my love, my wife.
 Farewell ! Henceforth the Grail commands my life.
 Farewell ! Farewell !

INTERVAL OF TEN MINUTES.

ETHEL SMYTH - "On the Cliffs of Cornwall"

Prelude to Act II. of *The Wreckers**

The story of Act II. of "The Wreckers" is as follows: Thirza, the beautiful young wife of the elderly headman of a Cornish village in the eighteenth century, is detested by the community, which she in turn abhors. She has a lover, Mark, whom she has persuaded to light warning beacons down the coast on stormy nights, when it is the habit of the Wreckers to extinguish the lighthouse lantern in order that ships may founder on the rocks. Having gathered (in Act I.) that suspicion is rife, Thirza steals forth in the night to warn her lover, who she knows will be lighting a beacon in a distant creek. A great love-scene ensues, in which she consents to fly with him, and, as a final act of defiance, kindles the bonfire with her own hands, while both sing the melody, "Blaze, fire of love, in deathless splendour!" on which this Prelude is based.

Its purport is a summary of their love-story.

The first three bars contain the sea-motif, an oft-recurring figure for muted strings, harp, and wood-wind, after which the Love-theme is heard, but in the minor mode and in the bass. A reference to this theme (No. 5) will serve to identify its entrance. A short questioning phrase for clarinets and the appearance of a motif suggesting the cry of sea-birds, interwoven with the sea-motif, swells gradually to *ff*, and dies sullenly away. The note of distress which up to now has been prominent is dispelled by a new melody on the oboe which leads directly to the Love-theme (now in the major mode, *pp*), for *cov anglais* and horn. This theme, working up

* Book of Words of "The Wreckers" on sale at the office of Mr. Thomas Quinlan, 318 Regent Street.

in a gradual *crescendo* to a triumphant outburst, sinks again ; the voice of the sea, the sad cry of the sea-bird, are heard once more, and, after a pause, enters the theme of Death. Those who have heard the soft boom of waves in a cavern will guess the end. In Cornwall there are many caves that the sea invades at high tide, the egress of which to the cliff above can be barred. The lovers are imprisoned, and the Love-theme is whispered by the violins as the doomed ones find union in death.

E. M. S.

Although Miss Ethel M. Smyth and her works are well known to musical connoisseurs, the following particulars may be welcome. The lady is a daughter of General Smyth, of the Royal Artillery, who fought in the Indian Mutiny. She studied music chiefly at Leipzig, for the most part privately with Heinrich von Herzogenberg, the correspondence of whom, as also of his wife Elizabeth, with Brahms has recently been published, in which is to be found frequent reference to Herzogenberg's young English pupil. Here in January, 1884, was played for the first time a string quartet from her pen, and three years later a Sonata in A minor for violin and pianoforte. The late Sir August Manns included in the programme of his benefit concert at the Crystal Palace on April 26th, 1890, her Serenade in D, and on the following October 18th produced her dramatic overture "Antony and Cleopatra." On January 18th, 1893, the Royal Choral Society, directed by the late Sir Joseph Barnby, performed Miss Smyth's Solemn Mass in D. This naturally drew widespread attention to her talents, and on December 7th, 1896, Mr. Henschel included in his Symphony Concert a Suite for strings in E. In May, 1898, was produced at Weimar "Fantasio," based upon Alfred de Musset's story, and this work, in revised form, was conducted by Mr. Mottl on February 10th and 17th, 1901. The following year, in March, the one-act opera "Der Wald" was mounted at the Royal Opera, Berlin, under the direction of Mr. Muck, and on July 18th, 1902, it was performed at Covent Garden under the conductorship of Mr. Lohse, the cast comprising Mesdames Lohse and Fremstad, and Messrs. Pennarini, Bispham, Blass, and

Klopfer. "The Wreckers" has had a somewhat chequered history. It was accepted under the name of "Strandrecht" late in 1905 by Mr. Arthur Nikisch for performance at the Leipzig opera-house, where it was produced in November, 1906, under Mr. Nikisch's successor. The work was most favourably received, and announced for repetition four days later, but was withdrawn by Miss Smyth, owing to the executive refusing to restore certain portions omitted without her consent. Shortly afterwards it was mounted at Prague, and last summer it was accepted by Mr. Mahler at Vienna, but his successor, Mr. Weingartner, has not yet presented it to the Viennese public.

A. K.

EDWARD ELGAR - Symphony in A Flat (Op. 55)

Andante Nobilimente e semplice. Allegro.
 Allegro Molto.
 Adagio.
 Lento. Allegro.

This work, so long awaited by the admirers of the composer of "The dream of Gerontius" and of the "Enigma" variations, appeared in the winter of 1908 and at once justified the opinions of those who had prophesied that when Elgar turned his attention to symphony he would do great things. Dedicated to Hans Richter, "True Artist and True Friend," this work has already earned for itself a notable reputation, and has been many times performed both in England and upon the Continent. It is not possible to appreciate the nobility and depth of its utterances at a single hearing; study and oft-rehearing are necessary for a true estimate of the value of this, its composer's first, and (so far) only symphony.

A large orchestra is employed, the wind-instruments being mostly in sets of three: for instance the two oboes are

supplemented by the *cor anglais*, the clarinets by the bass clarinet, the bassoons by the double bassoon. Much use is also made of the harps.

The slow introduction to the first movement presents to us the dignified and emotional melody which at once shows the touch of the composer of "Gerontius." This solemn and noble melody in A flat, heard on the flute, clarinet, bassoon, and violas, has a steady march-like accompaniment, and in a way dominates the whole Symphony. It is repeated by the full orchestra, and then the key changes (somewhat abruptly) to the remote tonality of D minor, in which the opening stands. This *Allegro* is impetuous and vigorous: it presents a large number of subjects for treatment; the first of these is forceful and passionate and is first heard upon the strings. In the absence of thematic quotation it is difficult to give any idea of the variety, both in melodic outline and in rhythmic structure, of the materials upon which this movement is constructed. The second subject, in the regular key of the relative major (F) is in 6-4 time, and is given to the violins and repeated by the clarinet. The beginning of the development section may be discovered from the fact that it is upon the theme of the introductory melody, which now appears upon the horns in the key of C. New thematic matter is also introduced, and the working from here to the end of the movement (including a fine *Coda*) is very complex, especially in the matter of rhythm. After working up to an imposing climax the movement comes to a quiet ending.

The second movement is the shortest of the four and stands in the key of F sharp minor: it is constructed upon a busy fluttering little figure for the violins in very rapid notes; too serious in character to be termed a *Scherzo*, it has much of the lightness of that class of movement. In contrast to the first subject is a bucolic and heavily masked one in C sharp minor, heard upon the violas and clarinets; then follows a return of the first theme. This part of the movement ends in A major: a change to the key of B flat (remote again) ensues, and the *Trio* portion is presented: this consists mainly of a theme played by the flutes, and continued by the violins.

When this has been to some extent utilised there is a return of the earlier part of the *Allegro molto* (the F sharp minor subject) which gradually quiets down until merely a single note is left hanging almost inaudibly on.

This note serves as the connecting link between the second and third movements, for the *Adagio* here begins without any break. It is difficult to speak other than extravagantly of the serene beauty of this glorious *Adagio cantabile*; it is one of the most highly emotional and poetically conceived of all slow movements, and the hearer is led from beauty to beauty, and there is much to enchant the ear, both in luscious melody, in sonorous orchestration, and in ingenuity of device. The theme upon which it is constructed and which is heard upon all the violins, is a note-for-note adaptation of the subject of the second movement (the *Allegro molto*), with complete change of rhythm and style. Elgar is here in his most felicitous mood, and this *Adagio* breathes a spirit of the most intense earnestness, and conveys to us a message of supreme beauty. This D major movement is indeed an inspired and noble piece of writing.

Like the first movement the last section of the Symphony has an extended introduction in slow time. It first of all hints at several preceding fragments, prominent among which is the theme with which the whole work began. When the time quickens from *Lento* to *Allegro* a new and resolute subject is propounded of a strongly-marked character in the key of D minor. Contrast to this is afforded by the second theme of the *Finale*, a melodious one for the clarinet. A notable passage follows, one in double sixths with a curious kind of double pedal below it which gives the music here somewhat of an Eastern character, and which suggests the influence of Tchaikovsky. After a time we are taken back to our "Motto" theme, and there is much energetic and forceful piling up of climaxes. At length we come to the *Coda*, a fine piece of writing, in which an apotheosis of the opening theme (once again and finally in the key of A major) is made with strings divided into many parts, with sonorous writing for the whole of the orchestra, and with a final thrilling proclamation of its

noble notes from the brass, this theme thunders forth the ending (as it whispered in the opening) of this great Symphony.

It is well to bear in mind that Elgar has disclaimed all "poetic basis" for his work: he has given it to us out of the fulness of his life's experience, and in it we may see the antagonism between the actual and the ideal in life, and the eventual triumph of the latter.

M. L.



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